THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) to (d) The research work carried out by Dr. Rao of University of Hyderabad, has shown that a key enzyme in DNA-repair system in brain cells; the DNA-polymerase beta, is defective in ageing brain cells thus leading to a decreased DNA-repair. This is a basic study and since the studies were conducted on experimental animals (rats), there is need to extend these studies to find out whether similar effects could be seen in vivo in these animals. Thereafter, these studies have to be extended to samples obtained from humans also. The present findings can, therefore, only be considered as pilot, and require further research before any new intervention for anti-ageing in the form of a drug etc. is available.

Health Problems by Tobacco Consumption

†1024. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that lacs of people die due to diseases caused by tobacco consumption in the country every year;

(b) if so, whether Government have conducted any assessment in this regard;

(c) if so, the results of such assessment; and

(d) whether Government have also considered to take legal steps to discourage tobacco consumption in the country; if so, the detailed information in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) to (c) It has been estimated by Indian Council of Medical Research that on an average around 8 lakh deaths occur annually in India due to tobacco. This estimate is on the basis of a nation wide survey conducted by National Sample Survey Organisation on the prevalence of tobacco use and the maximum and minimum relative risk of death on account of consumption of tobacco and tobacco products, as reported in Indian literature.

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(d) The Government is examining the feasibility of fomulating a comprehensive legislation for discouraging use of tobacco products.

Use of Professional Donors' Blood in Safdarjung Hospital

1025. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Safdarjung Hospital continues to use blood from professional donors, despite Supreme Court's judgement against the use of blood from professional donors;

(b) whether Government are aware of the nexus between the hospital's blood bank and certain contractors for arranging blood for the needy patients for a hefty price; and

(c) if so, what measures have been taken by Government to check the corrupt practices in the hospital's blood bank, besides taking suitable administrative action against the persons involved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) The Blood Bank of Safdarjung Hospital does not collect blood from professional donors.

(b) No such information has been received.

(c) Question does not arise.

Population Control Policy

†1026. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to take stringent measures to cope up with the grave situation of increasing population in the country at the earliest;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any draft has been formulated in this regard; and

(d) if so, by when the formulated draft is likely to be declared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) to (d) The Government

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.